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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

Thursday, June 20, 1968

WASHINGTON

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How hard it is to come by a day of ones very own. I've been here a whole week. The time devoured by filming, of the forewind of activity and people that Lyndon's presence always brings, by going over these houses with Bess and making notes about we need a new bedspread in the trailer and a light to do makeup by on the dresser in the Cedar House. And at last this morning I shut the door and cut off the phone and spent the whole morning taping. ~~XXXXXX~~ emerging about 12:30 to continue my rounds with Bess, have lunch, check on Simone and the filming operation. It's all finished.

And at 2:00, Operation Park. Because Jerry Rogers, the National Park Service historian, who is doing a sort of background script to provide material from which the Park Service will suggest exhibits for the visitors' center in the park across the River/ is here I thought it would ~~ga~~ be good to have another one of the meetings of all the diverse people that are working on that park and expose him to it.

So just yesterday, I had had them called and at 2:00 we began converging in the big rock living room. Mark Garsden, head of Texas parks and wildlife. Roy Rodman, head of the landscape artists of the Texas Highway Department. Curtis Tunnell, the archiologist who had been doing research on the log cabins. And Nancy ~~Kett~~. A totol exhibits staff of Texas parks. Torrace Cox, the President of the Gillespie County Historical Association. The ever faithful Roy White. And amazingly and delightful John Ben Shepherd, whom I had called at 11:00 last night on the way-out chance that he just might possibly

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could come or at least ought to be out of courtesy notified that we were meeting. He flew in -- probably the busiest one of us all. And Jerry Rogers from the National Park Service.

We spent about three hours, everybody reporting on the progress in his own field. Mark Gorden, whom I grow to like more and more, had the most hard news to report of course. The bids had come in and gloriously under the estimate and the contract had been met. I think maybe there was one more hurdle of red tape but it's virtually firm.

Then Mr. Torrance Cox told us of an old pioneer house over 100 years old that was being demolished had been obtained as a gift for the visitors' center. The fence around the wildlife area was proceeding with one thank-heavens change-- some steel staves would be removed and cedar ones inserted.

Curtis Tunnell reported on the stone foundations that had been uncovered right in front of the visitors' center. No, they don't know what it was. Wedding house, a barn? It was tentatively decided just to leave them there, probably grass right up to the edges, as a sort of exhibit.

Nancy Katt will soon have her furniture outlays ready for all of the cabins. And Mr. Cox insists that once the word gets around -- he wants to have several stories in the paper about these old log cabins and the need for furnishings -- that local people will come forward with items. That sounds optimistic to me. But he is quite assured.

And of course there was one thing that I kept on harping over and over. This was the best Spring within my memory. Within the next two weeks we had

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an opportunity unparalleled -- to harvest wild flower seed. If we could combine all efforts to do this, and it's a now or never proposition, and scatter truck after truck load particularly close to the roads in the little park, it could mean a lot for years to come. And here of course is where Mr. Rodman came in.

All eyes turned toward him. It's well known that the Highway Department has the know-how -- 30 years of experience. What could they do? He explained how the Highway Department had already scattered seed along Ranch Road 1 and on the Road from Stonewall to Albert. And he very gallantly promised cooperation, but I cannot say that he firmly assured us that X numbers of truckloads would be put into the park itself.

I reported that Dale had already harvested and spread some two truckloads inside the park along side the road that enters from 219. I told them about the conversation that I had had with Bill Cook that the Job Corps boys at Camp ~~Engle~~ Gary who are taking landscaping as one of their course would be available to harvest and spread a sizeable amount within the park.

Mark Gorden was ahead of me every foot of the way. He is already laying out a program for them which includes also cutting dead wood out some of the trees and other landscaping work.

I was delighted and I told them that our Ranch could furnish quantities of galardia and coreopsis seed, raises and thistles -- a great mixture. And Dale could show them where to harvest.

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Every now and then John Ben Shepherd would come forward with a sage of funny observation often jogging us off dead center and nudging us along the road toward conclusions instead of conversations.

He told of the grant of \$35,000 by Lawrence Rockefeller, \$5,000 of it for an over-all plan to be done by the National Park Service and the remainder toward the implementation of the plan -- the whole thing to be matched by other contributions. But it's vague in my mind whether they are State or individual contributions and whether this \$35,000 grant is really in our hands to use if there are no matching funds raised.

All sorts of talents have~~ll~~ gone into this little park, from botanists to archiologists to canny fund-raiser to loving restorer of old log cabins. And what is my role? I just furnish a setting and call us all together -- compliments on the things we've already done and hopes for the things that still remain to do. And cold beer and hot noches specials. And some day there will be something we can~~n~~ all be proud of I believe.

We wound up on the note of whether we should begin to have publicity -- stories about what we were doing and if so, how. Art ^{Powert}~~Covert~~ wants to do a full page, Mark ~~Garden~~ tells me. They all agreed that very soon we should get going on this. Heaven knows, we've suffered enough from the blasts of unfavorable publicity. So we might as well try to tell our story in pictures and exhibits.

Everybody left about 5:30 and I set off alone in that mood that always comes at the end of one of these trips to the Ranch of wanting to stick out

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your hand and make time stand still and savor the end of day as I ride over the top of the Martin and look out on the 360 degree view of rolling hills and big white clouds and a little church steeple in the valley.

The purple ~~this~~es are just reaching the end. The coreopsis which has been a carpet of gold over the pastures and hillsides two weeks ago are now almost gone. But the galardia are still blooming profusely, especially in the Dantz, and there are stretches of a just a near flow of every color -- pink Texas star and purple wine cup, millions of little white daisies, and Mexican hats in every combination of pale gold, golden brown, deep almost orange and even brown velvet, and some of the white Mexican poppys that look so exotic, and a good many other flowers that I never saw before and cannot even name.

The tower called me that Les and Liz had arrived. Everybody was ready. Bess and the children and Simone. And so I went back to the Ranch, boarded the convair full of film crews, stewards, and our little group, and off we put for Andrews for the very amusing recital enroute from Liz and Les about their adventures at Hemis Fair. They have a talent for quickly discovering the brightest and most fun people.

We had sandwiches and drinks, tried to take a nap, arrived at Andrews, rode in hearing a ~~xxx~~ brief capsule of what the last two days had been like in this Capital. The headlines read, "50,000 March in Support of the Poor", but it had gone off reasonably peacefully -- Mrs. King emerging as the most

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dramatic person and my heart went out as it has all this summer long to
Walter Washington and to Nash Castro.

And by 1:00 I was home in the White House and to bed.